

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission Meeting

Thursday, January 2, 2003; 9:00 A.M.

State Capitol Building, Room 464

Pierre, South Dakota

MINUTES OF THE AD HOC MEETING

Chairman Jim Burg called the meeting to order. Also present were Commissioner Pam Nelson; Commissioner Bob Sahr; Executive Director Debra Elofson; Commission Advisor Greg Rislov; Commission Counsel John Smith; Commission Attorney Rolayne Ailts Wiest; Staff Attorney Karen Cremer; Staff Analysts Harlan Best, Heather Forney, Keith Senger, Michele Farris and Mary Healy; and Administrative Secretary Tina Douglas.

Also present were Talbot Wieczorek, Gunderson, Paul, Goodsell, and Nelson; Richard Coit, SD Telecommunications Association; Mark Ayotte, Briggs and Morgan; Rae Ann Kelsch, Western Wireless; Dick Gregerson, Woods, Fuller, Shultz, and Smith; and Steven Weigler, AT&T.

Joining the meeting by telephone were Joe Schuele, Martin Group; and Meredith Moore, Cutler and Donahoe.

Telecommunications

1. TC98-146 IN THE MATTER OF THE FILING BY GCC LICENSE CORPORATION FOR DESIGNATION AS AN ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER. (Staff Analyst: Harlan Best, Staff Attorney: Karen Cremer.)

Mark Ayotte, representing Western Wireless Corporation, explained that the Commission should designate GCC as an ETC in the rural telephone exchanges listed in the Stipulation. Western Wireless (formerly known as GCC) has met all the requirements required by the Commission and therefore should be approved as an eligible telecommunications carrier. Richard Coit, representing SDTA, stated that Western Wireless will not be able to deliver on its Universal Service Offerings at an adequate level and the Commission may need to exercise continuing oversight to ensure that Western Wireless meets its commitments. Ms. Wiest stated that Western Wireless has complied with Commission filing requirements. Ms. Cremer stated that Staff's analysis demonstrates that Western Wireless has complied with the October 18, 2001, Order and therefore the Commission may grant ETC status for the rural areas requested by Western Wireless.

Chairman Burg moved that the Commission find that Western Wireless has complied with the conditions listed in the Order dated October 18, 2001. Commissioner Sahr seconded and Commissioner Nelson concurred. Motion passed 3-0.